WE CLAIM:

1. A wrap-around notebook comprising:

a front cover, a rear cover and a spine pivotally coupled to the front and rear covers;

a ring assembly comprising two elongated frame members pivotally coupled together along one edge of each frame member; a shield member made of springy metal biasing the frame members toward each other to provide first and second stable positions for the frame members; a first set of half rings secured to one of the frame members on one side of the frame members; and a second mating set of half rings mounted on the other frame member on the other side of the frame members to engage the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the first stable position, and being spaced apart from the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the second stable position; and

a hinge plate pivotally secured to the shield member with the outer surface of the hinge plate being substantially aligned with the outer surface of the shield/frame assembly when the hinge plate is oriented parallel to the plane of the shield.

2. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein the shield is pivoted to the hinge plate by curls extending from the shield and mating curls formed along one edge of the hinge plate.

3. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein the frame members are convexly curved outward.

4. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein the ends of the shield are curved and the length of the shield is substantially less than the top-to-bottom extent of the notebook covers.

5. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein the frames are recessed at the areas where the half rings are secured to the frames, to avoid protrusions on the frame side of the ring assembly.

6. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein two hinge plates are provided.

7. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein the ring assembly is mounted with the pivot line between the hinge plate and the shield extending along and immediately adjacent the pivot line between the rear cover and the spine, with the shield side of the ring assembly facing toward the front cover.

8. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein the frames are plated for corrosion protection and aesthetic appeal.

9. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 1 wherein the pivot line between the shield and the hinge plate is spaced from the shield by a clearance distance.

10. A wrap-around notebook or binder comprising:

a front cover and a rear cover;

a ring assembly comprising two elongated frame members pivotally coupled together along one edge of each frame member; a shield member made of springy metal biasing the frame members toward each other to provide first and second stable positions for the frame members; a first set of half rings secured to one of the frame members on one side of the frame members; and a second mating set of half rings mounted on the other frame member on the other side of the frame members to engage the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the first stable position, and being spaced apart from the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the second stable position;

the frame members being convexly curved outward; and

the covers being mounted to the ring assembly.

11. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 10 wherein the ends of the shield are curved and the length of the shield is substantially less than the top-to-bottom extent of the notebook covers.

12. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 10 wherein the frames are recessed at the areas where the half rings are secured to the frames, to avoid protrusions on the frame side of the ring assembly.

13. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 10 wherein the frames are plated for corrosion protection and aesthetic appeal.

14. A wrap-around notebook comprising:

a front cover, a rear cover and a spine panel pivotally coupled to the front and rear covers;

a ring assembly comprising two elongated frame members pivotally coupled together along one edge of each frame member; a shield member made of springy metal biasing the frame members toward each other to provide first and second stable positions for the frame members; and a first set of half rings secured to one of the frame members on one side of the frame members; and a second mating set of half rings mounted on the other frame member on the other side of the frame members to engage the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the first stable position, and being spaced apart from the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the second stable position;

a hinge plate pivotally secured to the shield member with the outer surface of the hinge plate being substantially aligned with the outer surface of the shield/frame assembly when the hinge plate is oriented parallel to the plane of the shield;

the shield being pivoted to the hinge plate by curls extending from the shield and mating curls formed along one edge of the hinge plate;

the frame members being convexly curved outward;

the ends of the shield being curved and the length of the shield being substantially less than the top-to-bottom extent of the notebook covers;

the frames being recessed at the areas where the half rings are secured to the frames, to avoid protrusions on the frame side of the ring assembly;

the ring assembly being mounted with the pivot line between the hinge plate and the shield extending along immediately adjacent the pivot line between the rear cover and the spine, with the shield side of the ring assembly facing toward the front cover; and

the frames being plated.

15. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 14 wherein two hinge plates are provided.

16. A wrap-around binder comprising:

a ring assembly comprising two elongated frame members pivotally coupled together along one edge of each frame member; a shield member made of springy metal biasing the frame members toward each other to provide first and second stable positions for the frame members; a first set of half rings secured to one of the frame members on one side of the frame members; and a second mating set of half rings mounted on the other frame member on the other side of the frame members to engage the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the first stable position, and being spaced apart from the first set of half rings when the frame members are in the second stable position; and

the frame members being convexly curved outward.

17. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 16 wherein the ends of the shield are curved and the length of the shield is substantially less than the top-to-bottom extent of the notebook covers.

18. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 16 wherein the frames are recessed at the areas where the half rings are secured to the frames, to avoid protrusions on the frame side of the ring assembly.

19. A wrap-around notebook as defined in claim 16 wherein the frames are plated for corrosion protection and aesthetic appeal.

20. A wrap-around binder as defined in claim 16 further comprising front and rear covers mounted to the ring assembly.

21. A wrap-around binder as defined in claim 16 further comprising a hinge plate pivotally connected to the shield member and aligned with the top thereof.

22. A wrap-around binder as defined in claim 16 further comprising a hinge plate pivotally connected to the shield, and aligned with the outermost extent of the frames when the plane of the pivot plate is parallel with the plane of the shield.